NCA
VOC FOR PGM/FN
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RHODESIAN SANCTIONS: WHERE THEY STAND

ANNCR:

CONTINUED U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA IS OPEN TO SOME DOUBT AS A RESULT OF A VOTE ON WEDNESDAY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. THE HOUSE VOTE FOLLOWS A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT APPROACH ADOPTED LAST MONTH BY THE U.S. SENATE. CHRIS KERN HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT.

VOICE:

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARD RHODESIA HAS BEEN CHALLENGED, BUT NOT YET OVERRULED, BY THE VOTE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO LIFT TRADE SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA IF A FREELY ELECTED GOVERNMENT IS ESTABLISHED BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

THE HOUSE ADOPTED A PROVISION TO THAT EFFECT ON WEDNESDAY BY A 229 TO 180 VOTE AMENDING THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSED MILITARY AID AUTHORIZATION BILL. THE PROPOSAL WAS SPONSORED BY MISSOURI DEMOCRAT RICHARD ICHORD, WHO SAID THE UNITED STATES SHOULD NOT FORCE THE INTERIM RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS THE "COMMUNIST" GUERRILLA GROUPS THAT ARE OPPOSING THE SALISBURY REGIME. DURING THE DEBATE, OTHER CONGRESSMEN CRITICIZED THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOR WHAT THEY CALLED ITS BIAS IN FAVOR OF THE BLACK GUERRILLAS, WHO OPERATE OUT OF BASES IN THE SO-CALLED "FRONT-LINE" BLACK-RULED COUNTRIES THAT SURROUND RHODESIA.

THE UNITED STATES -- ALONG WITH BRITAIN, THE FORMER COLONIAL POWER IN RHODESIA -- HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND THE BLACK

GUERRILLAS STARTED. THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN IS AIMED AT CREATING A BLACK MAJORITY GOVERNMENT IN WHICH ALL SIDES, INCLUDING THE GUERRILLAS, WOULD PARTICIPATE. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION ARGUES THAT CONTINUED ECONOMIC SANCTIONS, INTERNATIONALLY APPLIED, ARE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN THE PRESSURE FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

THE HOUSE RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD HAVE THE FORCE OF LAW, WOULD REQUIRE MR. CARTER TO END THE SANCTIONS IF A NEW GOVERNMENT IS CHOSEN THROUGH FREE ELECTIONS. IT REQUIRES THAT THE BLACK GUERRILLAS, COLLECTIVELY KNOWN AS THE "PATRIOTIC FRONT," BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS, BUT THE SANCTIONS WOULD BE ENDED ANYWAY IF THE GUERRILLAS BOYCOTT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. BY CONTRAST, THE SENATE PASSED A PROVISION LAST MONTH THAT SIMILARLY CALLS FOR ENDING THE SANCTIONS AFTER FREE ELECTIONS, BUT WITH THE ADDED CONDITION THAT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, WHICH THEY SO FAR HAVE REFUSED TO DO.

AS IS ALWAYS THE CASE WHEN THE HOUSE AND SENATE PASS DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF A BILL, THE FINAL WORDING WILL BE WORKED OUT BY A CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTING BOTH CHAMBERS. CARTER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS -- WHO FEAR A WORSENING OF AMERICAN RELATIONS WITH BLACK AFRICA IF THE HOUSE-PASSED VERSION SURVIVES -- WILL TRY TO GET THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE TO ADOPT LANGUAGE SIMILAR TO THE MILDER SENATE RESOLUTION, THUS NEUTRALIZING WEDNESDAY'S ACTION BY THE HOUSE.

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